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REBELLION, SLAVERY, AND PEACE.

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BY HON. N. G. UPHAM.

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*Friends and Fellow-Citizens :*

I wish to say a few words by way of preface to the remarks I propose to make on this occasion. There are various matters involved in the controversy in which we are now engaged, requiring the examination and candid consideration of every intelligent mind. In the midst of times of excitement like the present, it is difficult to gain such consideration, but it is, notwithstanding, the basis of all consistent, reliable action. I shall attempt, therefore, to persuade your judgment in anything I may say, rather than arouse your feelings by impassioned appeals.

I propose to address you on the subject of *Rebellion, Slavery and Peace, in their mutual bearings and relations to each other, and so far as a right understanding of those relations may affect our destiny and duty as a people.*

Rebellion is armed opposition against the government of a country to which one owes allegiance. Such opposition is necessarily vested in the control of some leader, committee of safety, directory, or other mode of rule extemporized or adopted for the occasion. The rebellion may extend throughout the limits of a city, a county, or a state, and the ordinary government of such organizations be perverted into agencies to carry on and maintain such rebellion. But whether it as-

sumes to act through any such prior agency, or originates an entirely new agency for this purpose—whether it is made up of the people of parts of states, of whole states, or of a combination of various states, is immaterial. If the action is a concerted disavowal of allegiance to the government, and an armed opposition to it—it is in all such cases alike rebellion, under whatever name it may be called.

Such a rebellion, if resisted, becomes at once civil war—one of the most deadly and destructive calamities known to man ; and, when commenced against a government of a well-ordered, beneficent character, is a crime of unparalleled enormity.

In such a war, all concerned are principals, and are subject to the forfeiture of life and estate. But when large numbers of a population are in arms, the crime assumes, for the time being, the proportions and character of a strife between nations, and must be governed in its conduct by the ordinary rules of war, to abide in the end the result it merits.

Such is the character of the war in which we are engaged. Treason extends through one third of the Union. It has usurped state organizations, turning them against us, and wields, for the time being, practical sovereignty over their limits. It has been declared, by our highest judicial authority, “a territorial civil war.” It is a war of enormous extent and terrific power, as its continuance for three lamentable years so fully testifies.

#### EFFECT OF REBELLION ON SLAVERY.

The controversy exists between a section of country where slavery prevails, and one where the people, with a slight exception, are wholly free ; and the very first question raised in the encounter, to which we propose to direct your attention, is, what is to become of the slave as our armies advance into the enemy’s territory ?

We contend that the power of the master over the slave is not of a character that a belligerent, by any of the established rules of war, is bound to respect. This seems well sustained by various reasons.

1. We may rightfully seize and appropriate to our use all articles contraband of war.

As our armies moved into Southern territory, people previously held in involuntary servitude rushed to them for protection. What was to be done with them? This question was promptly solved by General Butler, on whom the contingency was forced. "I know what they are," he says; "they are contraband of war." This decision is well sustained against slaveholders on every principle. The whole history of the contest shows that slaves have been used by the South, wherever they could be made available in the maintenance of the war, against us, and it is not for the confederate government to deny that we can seize such property and apply it in our defence, as we would a cannon or locomotive.

Or, if the slaves are to be regarded as men, bound like their masters in loyalty to the government, they have an undoubted right to escape from the perverted power asserted over them by the South to the control of the only government to which they owe allegiance, and they may thus strike home with us, as free and loyal men, against a common enemy.

John Quincy Adams saw this result as inevitable in case of intestine collision, and if the South saw it not, in their hasty secession, it was the fault of their own recklessness, and is another instance of that

Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself,  
And falls on the other side."

The Southern slaveholder may declaim against this result, and the barbarity of turning the exasperated slave against his former master, but, under his new military life, he becomes thoroughly drilled, and is held subject, in his hostility, to all the rules of war. Beside, if exasperated, we may well ask, who made him so? and how this compares with his happy and contented condition, which has been so often presented to us? Thus far the conduct of the liberated slaves has been commendable. There certainly have been no outrages committed by them comparable to those habitually

manifested by Southern men against Union citizens within their precincts.

2. In the second place, we contend, if the slave escapes, in consequence of the war, from his master's control, it is to be regarded as a voluntary relinquishment of him by the master.

If a Southern slaveholder brings his slave with him to a Northern state, he voluntarily liberates him. If he is once within a free state, and is not a fugitive, there is no law which can hold him in bondage.

So where the treason of the master causes war, the master voluntarily accepts all the results embraced in his acts ; and if his hold over his slave is loosened thereby, so that he is captured, or escapes to the enemy, it is a voluntary surrender of him to those incidents that work out his freedom. When peace returns, should the master follow him to a free state, to reassert his right, the escape, under the circumstances, would be held as, in effect, a voluntary manumission by the master, which he would be estopped from denying. It may be considered a maxim, that the slaveholder who declares war subjects himself, of his own free choice, to the loss of all slaves that may be swept from him in its vortex.

3. Again, the slave, under such circumstances, is liberated, because all law that could hold him is, for the time being, practically abrogated.

While secession is paramount in any section of country, it dissolves all connection with this government. Victory, after a longer or shorter period, may reinstate our power, and revive the rights we once held, but, in the meantime, there is an entire *interregnum* ; and if, during that period, the slave comes within our limits, he comes where there is no law in force to bind him ; he is a free man, and no subsequent revival of any such law can react on him. It might react on certain rights of property, known as such by public law, but could not revive to reinslave a person held only by local statute, from under which he had escaped while inoperative by the voluntary action of such local power. No case is known, after peace has been declared, of the compulsory return of slaves that escaped to a belligerent in time of war ; and a

civil war, especially, should form no exception to the general rule.

4. Farther—treason, on the part of the master, subjects his slaves and other property to forfeiture by confiscation or liberation.

By act of Congress of July 17, 1862, the slaves of all persons adjudged guilty of treason are declared to be, and are made, free ; and no slave, on application, can be surrendered up, or in any way hindered or impeded in his liberty, unless oath shall first be made that the master of such slave hath not borne arms against the United States in the present rebellion, or in any way given aid or comfort thereto. The open war waged by the South, embracing in it for the most part its entire residents as aiders and abettors of treason, renders this law practically an entire abolition of slavery.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATION.

In connection with these views of the necessary operation of war on slavery, I propose to consider the effect of the President's proclamation. This is a war measure, based substantially on the rights we have asserted ; making them prominent, by official announcement, and conclusive and absolute, unless prevented by a return to loyalty within a specified period. This measure was rendered necessary, as the South seems to have entered into the war to sustain slavery with the belief that during its continuance, and until its final result, slavery could not be affected by it. The same feeling prevailed to some extent at the North.

The early events of the war, as managed by us, encouraged this idea. Many among us entertained the belief that the South would early return to reason and loyalty, and were opposed to the full exercise of the powers of war, lest it should interpose new obstacles to such return. Experience soon banished this delusive hope. It was found that the leaders of the rebellion had staked their all on the issue of the contest. Bad as their cause was, in emulation of our fathers they had determined that, sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish,

they would have no connection with a government where freedom was the rule and slavery the exception. They had fully determined they would have a government where slavery was not regarded as a merely incidental matter, but as its chief corner-stone ; and based, in their own phrase, " on the proper relations of labor and capital, where they might vindicate, on their own chosen arena, their selected type of social characteristics."\* Our people talked of peace commissioners, peace propositions, and a return to the Union. They scoffed at the suggestion ; trampled upon it ; spit upon it. No ! Slavery they would have under their own independent " homogeneous nationality ;" a Union with free states they would not have. Such is the exact position assumed toward us by the South.

But the President, notwithstanding all this, concludes to try them once more. " You may have slavery," he says, " if you return to loyalty and the Constitution within a given time, but if you do not return we will dispose of that cause of controversy, and, as a penalty for your farther persistence in the war, we will confiscate your interest in slave property."

Three objections have been taken to this proclamation. The first is, that the President should have offered no such terms to traitors with arms in their hands. This objection is now of no avail. It is sufficient, perhaps, to say that it clearly manifested a desire on the part of the President for peace.

The second objection is, that the proclamation is unconstitutional. This I will endeavor to consider by-and-by.

A third objection seems to come from the South. " Why," say they, " in much the larger portion of our territory, where you propose to abolish slavery, you have no possession ; how, then, can you, by mere proclamation, emancipate slaves over whom you have no control ? Suppose you fail of getting possession of the country ?" Ay, there is the rub ! But when a great country, embracing the entire Northern, Western, and Middle States, is engaged in maintaining its government and preserving the Union, so vital to the cause of freedom here, and of suffering humanity throughout the world, the effort is

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See address of the Confederate Congress to the Southern people.

*not very likely to fail.* This is what troubles the South. The President makes the proclamation, and runs his risk. Time only can tell the result. But this is certain : just so fast and just so far as our armies advance, slavery is overthrown, and the proclamation is a reality !

It was important, moreover, that the precise issue raised in this struggle, and persisted in by the South, should be known—that our army, as it bore the broad standard of the nation southward, should understand that no man who fled from Southern traitors to stand beneath its folds could stand there as a slave. It was important, also, that our friends abroad, who consist of the entire mass of the population of Europe, saving only their hereditary rulers and their immediate satellites, who are the enemies of freedom everywhere—it was important, in this long night of our affliction, while they were bending forward to see through the thick darkness how went the battle, that they should know what was involved in this direful struggle.

“ Watchman ! tell us of the night,  
What it signs of promise are !  
Traveller ! o'er yon mountain's height,  
See that glory-beaming star !”

The President did not make this issue. The South made it. He merely announces to the world the fact. Their war-cry, from the first, ringing along the line of all their hosts, has been, “ Down with the Union to save slavery !” If this be so, what *can* our war-cry be but the exact reverse of it : “ Down with slavery, down with any interposing force or obstacle, whatever it may be, to save the Union !”

#### FUTURE INSUBORDINATION OF THE SLAVE.

But there is another mode in which the *Rebellion is affecting slavery*, which I wish to consider, and that is, its home aspect, as it operates on the mind of the slave himself.

Not only the free people of the North and South have an interest in the controversy now going on, but the poor slave himself. It is in vain to suppose that he does not fully understand the moving cause of this contest. Early in the war,



Mr. N. P Willis, of the *Home Journal*, visited the Custis estate, the property of General Lee, then and now held as a military post, at Arlington ; and seeing there an aged, gray-headed negress remaining sitting in apparent lethargy in the garden grounds, he asked her the meaning of this controversy. She roused herself a moment from her stupor to say, "It's all about what we've been suffering so long." The slaves everywhere understand this. The surging of troops backward and forward through the land ; the digging of trenches ; the strife ; the bearing back of the wounded ; the burial of the dead ; the direful changes wrought on the whole surface of the South, tell the tale in a thousand ways to eagerly listening ears. No breeze, no sigh, no suppressed groan, no muttering thunder of distant cannon escapes them. They all know, in their own phraseology, "It's all about what we've been suffering so long !"

This awakened excitement never can be put down. Out of all civil war there necessarily comes some shock, and some changes. When the sturdy oak of the forest is struck by lightning, the trunk is not only seamed and scorched and riven, but its weaker branches are usually hurled to the ground, so that no reconstruction can repair it. And it is often the case that the abuses or perverted institutions of society that have caused civil war, have been broken down, consumed or annihilated by the strife, so that, when it ceased, the stake for which the party had thrown down the gauge of battle is destroyed, or has become shattered, deteriorated, or worthless.

The South are in danger of finding such to be the result in their case. It is questionable whether, in any event, they will ever again be able to drive the blacks to their daily tasks with any hope of profit. They may find their only alternative from this issue, even if left to their own nationality, to be, everlasting bloodshed, or an utter change in their constitutions of society, from a state of slavery to one of compensated labor, so infinitely more beneficial both to master and slave !

I have thus far attempted to define *the rights of war as*

*bearing on the institution of slavery ; the nature and effect of the President's Proclamation, as a war measure, and the influence of the war on the character of the slave himself.*

**AUTHORITY TO MAKE PEACE, AND WHAT CONSTITUTES PEACE.**

I now propose to consider the question of peace. But, in doing this, it is necessary to determine the preliminary matters—in whom rests the power to make peace, and what constitutes a state of peace in transition from rebellion to loyalty. I farther propose to consider the reasons and grounds on which alone peace can be made, consistently with permanence, and insuring the best interests and harmony of the whole people.

There are individuals who propose to extend the absurd doctrine of a constitutional right of any state to secede at pleasure from the Union, to the farther right to secede back from the Confederacy to our councils, at their own pleasure, without query on our part ; and who contend such return of a state constitutes peace. If, in the meantime, they say, their citizens have been guilty of any crime against the government, in their temporary absence, they must be indicted by a grand jury, and tried for treason, and this is our remedy. But we do not so regard it. The South rejected the jurisdiction of our civil tribunals, and resorted to war, and war, once appealed to, is the arbiter of its own difficulties.

It is for the government to determine when the hostility of a state ceases, and the rebellion has terminated. If the rebellious states come back to the Union, we wish to know whether they come back claiming a right to secede again at their pleasure, or to resume their constitutional place as a component and subordinate part of the government ? Whether they come back trumpeting aloud their defiant heresies, succumbing temporarily to gain strength for new collisions ; or, repudiating their past errors, ready, joyfully to follow the national flag, and keep time to the music of the Union.

Until these questions are rightly answered, we can have no assurance that we are to have the Constitution as it is, or the

Union as it was, except subject to the construction of those who have, without cause or just sanction of any kind, traitorously overthrown both.

The Constitution, as we claim it, and swear to abide by it, is as different from the Constitution asserted to exist by the South, as light from darkness. The Constitution, as the South claim it, is a pitiful delusion, a travestie on government; a mere disintegrating mass, where each individual atom of which it is composed is greater than the whole.

It is not for the succumbing or yielding party to dictate terms of peace, and such consideration, especially, is not due to one that has held the position of a rebel. The hoisting of a white flag or the throwing down of arms is not peace. There may still be a refusal to take the oath of allegiance, or to assume or discharge any of the duties of a loyal citizen.

It is a difficult matter, where each state has its own separate organization, and, at the same time, is part and parcel of the general government, to change its people in rebellion into good and loyal citizens. But this difficulty only increases the necessity of care and caution in making such change. • Surely the loyalty of the citizen can not be safely admitted till he is relieved from all taint as a rebel. The participator in rebellion has forfeited his life, and, much more, any reasonable claim to his rights of franchise, which can only be extended to him by the government, through pardon to him, when the rebellion is suppressed. Questions, then, of the proper restoration of the citizen to his rights of franchise, and reconstruction of the government, become all-important at a time like this.

On this point various theories have been suggested, which, for some time to come, must occupy, *in a marked degree, the public attention*. These several theories contemplate action by the government, and amnesty to some extent. The difference is only in degree.

The President holds that, with regard to the masses of the people, the amnesty, with a view to peace, should be an entire pardon, with the single exception that property in slaves should be abandoned by them. The so-called peace party re-

bel at this suggestion, and allege that the interference of the President with slavery, in his proclamation and amnesty, is both unconstitutional and unwise.

CONSTITUTIONALITY OF THE PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATIONS AS  
TO SLAVERY AND AMNESTY.

The charge as to the unconstitutionality of these measures I propose here to examine. It resolves itself into the question which we have just been discussing in part, whether the nation, through its chief executive magistrate, has power to dictate terms of peace to rebels? He either has this power, or there is some precise limitation of it, which his act transcends. If the latter be the case, what is the limit to such power, and by whom is it to be exercised?

Congress has the power to control the acts of the President in most matters relating to war, and measures to enforce the laws of the United States, and to suppress insurrections and invasions. But, until such action of Congress, the measures of the President, within the scope of his war powers as chief executive officer of the government, and as commander-in-chief of the army and navy, are valid. Within such scope, which has a wide limit, all his acts are discretionary.

In addition, he has an unlimited power to grant reprieves and pardons for all offences against the United States, except in cases of impeachment. In time of foreign war, he may make a truce or armistice at his pleasure, and a peace, subject to the approval of the Senate. In case of rebellion, it is his duty to persist in measures for its suppression until it is terminated; of which termination he alone is to be the judge, unless Congress interfere by its supervisory power over him. It is an exercise of judgment which no judicial authority has a right to reverse or declare unconstitutional. So long as Congress does not assume the control of such measures, the acts of the President are to be regarded as sound and just; or, if they are otherwise, the only proper remedy is by impeachment.

Subject to these limitations and restrictions, had the Presi-

dent power to order armies, as they marched into the rebellious states, to liberate the slaves of rebels? It is undoubtedly a perfectly legitimate exercise of the war power, as we have already shown. But it is said he undertook to liberate slaves in large tracts of country, far beyond the immediate reach of the army. He did undertake to do this, unless the parties then in rebellion returned to their allegiance within a given time. But does the fact that the slaves were not then immediately within the reach of his armies make any difference, provided the power of the government ultimately reaches them? It seems to me the difference of time in perfecting the liberation announced makes no difference in principle. At all events there is no *constitutional* objection to the act. There is no power that can reverse it but Congress; and, so far as it is an act done, it is questionable whether Congress has power over it.

The power of amnesty in the President, in case of treason, is a direct constitutional grant, which all concede can not be interfered with.

From the remarks made it must be apparent that, *the movements of our armies to put down rebellion their interference with local institutions, as a rightful effect of war, the offers of amnesty as a preliminary to peace, and the determining when peace and order are so established that it is safe to withdraw our armies, and trust to the efficiency of the civil arm of government for the due exercise of its authority, are all legitimate exercises of the powers of government.* And in the discharges of these powers it is but fair to presume the President and representatives of the people will endeavor to act for the best interests of the public.

#### TERMS OF PEACE.

I now propose to consider the question of terms of peace wholly independent of any measures the government may have taken in regard to it, and solely on what I conceive to be its just merits.

In doing this I set aside altogether any idea of peace in

connection with a dissevered Union. God and nature seem to have determined, in the configuration of our country, that we must remain one in union and one in destiny. There has been no contingency suggested which presents such a perpetual store-house of evils as a divided empire. Our people will not consent to be thrust back as an interior nation, cut off from the free outlet to the ocean through our large bays and rivers, or our being restricted to a limited or doubtful control over them. They will tolerate no hostile nation on our shores in alliance, offensive and defensive, with foreign despotisms. We have passed that contingency, I trust, if it ever existed, and stand firmly on the old Jackson ground—the Union, it must and shall be preserved!

Any question of peace which I shall consider will be peace where it alone is admissible—PEACE WITHIN THE UNION.

And I lay down here this proposition, that it is the duty of the government to make peace *whenever it can do so with a reasonable assurance that peace will be permanent.*

PEACE INCONSISTENT WITH THE CONTINUANCE OF SLAVERY.

In the second place, I lay down the further proposition *that there can be no reasonable assurance of a permanent peace while slavery exists.*

The reasons for this opinion I will endeavor to give. The history of the past shows that slavery has been a constantly disturbing element in our government. On the first establishment of the Constitution our western boundary was on the Mississippi river. Our whole country at that time was, for the most part, substantially settled, saving the Northwestern territory, which, under the impulse of those days in favor of liberty, was early set apart for a free population. Since that time our territory has been so enlarged that the Mississippi river now nearly dissects us into two equal regions of country. Our flag floats alike on the shores of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. In the words of an early New Hampshire poet—

“No pent-up Utica contracts our powers,  
For the whole boundless continent is ours.”

These changes have vastly multiplied the grounds of collision between the free and slave states, so that the battle has been fought between them over the acquisition of each foot of territory, the admission of each new state, the preliminary occupation and organization of each new territorial government, and in a thousand other instances where the lines of demarcation of their respective interests seemed to clash.

Europe has changed in the meantime. The Bourbon dynasty has gone down. New ideas of liberty have thrilled through the people of Europe. The spirit of the age is tending toward freedom everywhere. An emigration has flocked from the Old World, and peopled the Northern free states with unexampled rapidity, and the vanguard of millions, yet to come, are on the way.

A strife of opinions has been awakened among us, acting and reacting on each other, through the movements of extremists of either party, until their antagonistic forces have ultimately come in collision with a power and fearfulness that show the desperate nature of the encounter, and the question now arises, when will this strife stop? I answer that it will stop when the winds stop their motion; when the waves cease to roll; when truth shall succumb to falsehood; when darkness shall settle down on the earth like a pall, and the sun of light, and glory, and civilization, shall cease to shine. Never until then!

In prior portions of our history the efforts of many noble, loyal men, including Webster, Clay, and Jackson, have been put forth to conciliate, ward off, or repel the numerous evils, actual and threatened, arising from this conflict; but the result of their efforts was temporary. The danger was merely delayed. The hostility continued until slavery, at last, manifested its true character in sundering the Union and waging war against the government; and the question now arises whether there is any possibility of greater hope of the future than has existed in the past?

After the appalling calamities visited upon us by slavery, and the greatly increased hatred that exists toward it, can it be expected, if slavery should, under any circumstances, be

received back again into our councils, that Northern men will be ready, on account of any constitutional requirement, to rush to the South to put down servile insurrections? If a slave flees to the North, will our people henceforth rally, unitedly and harmoniously, to send him back to slavery? Shall we be willing to retain forever, as part of our inheritance, the balancing of free state against slave; the strife, the hatred, the antagonism between the systems of free and slave labor? Shall free speech be violently prohibited at the South, as heretofore, leaving the safety of Northern men, who may be casually there, at the mere caprice of an infuriate mob? Shall continual collisions exist as to the right of the South to extend slavery at their pleasure into the territories? And shall new efforts and raids be made against friendly governments, to acquire slave territory to be annexed to the Union, involving us in continual difficulties both at home and abroad? In fine, shall we have for ever reenacted the same disturbances, divisions, and animosities, that have characterized our position, arising from our connection with slavery, and which have culminated in the fearful controversy in which we are now involved?

These questions demand *the earnest consideration and fair answer* of all who are desirous of peace. They are not questions for the North to consider merely, but for the South, and for every reflecting man throughout the country.

If in time past these things were barely tolerated; if peace was then uncertain, and for ever trembling in the balance, can we expect anything better in the future? Is it possible that our excited, suffering people will endure again, willingly, all these tribulations? and is this endurance peace?

Besides, the question of peace with slavery appeals directly to the South on account of the bearing of the Rebellion on the character of the slave on his own soil—the home aspect of slavery—to which I have before adverted, but to which I will again recur.

The armies of the Union have penetrated in various directions far into the Confederate territory; have sundered its states into two sections, and have either shut up its promi-



ment seaports, or hold them by an armed force, and the pervading influence of freedom is reaching the slave on every threshold and hearthstone of the South.

It has become exceedingly doubtful whether the African race, with their newly awakened ideas of liberty, can be henceforth kept in slavery, in any contingency. Secession, that was designed to sunder the Union, has thus far sundered merely the bonds of slavery, or has so far weakened or paralyzed the rule of the master as to render the institution dangerous to him, and, in a prudential point of view, nearly or quite worthless.

The hope of freedom, now so prominent before the slave, is the only remaining safety-valve of slavery. Remove this, and there is danger, to say the least, of its being a mere lifelong insurrection, either destroying or placing in perpetual peril the happiness and best interests of the South.

#### COMPARATIVE VALUE OF THE UNION AND SLAVERY.

But there are other considerations bearing on this question, worthy of examination, arising from the comparative value of slavery and the Union.

If any one should doubt whether slavery was *necessarily the death of the Union*, still, if he believed its existence *would seriously endanger and imperil it*, that danger should insure its overthrow.

The value of the Union cannot be calculated. If our mountains were transmuted into gold they would form no appreciable commencement toward its valuation. There is no known quantity by which to estimate it.

On the other hand, the value of slavery can be calculated. The Southern planter will readily tell you the value of his best slaves, and the average value of the whole, reckoning together the young, the middle-aged, the old and infirm, of both sexes.

Now the North alone has paid two thousand millions of dollars on account of slavery, and will necessarily pay quite as much more by way of interest before this debt is liquidated.

It has sacrificed also two hundred thousand lives, and yet slavery is still crying, "Give ! Give !"

Is this not enough to pay for slavery ? And if this is the price we have already paid for it, and which we may have to pay again, is it not too great a risk to incur, to receive it back without terms and without question, to citizenship and life, when it is now a convicted felon, under sentence of death for its treason ? Is it not altogether too much to put at hazard, if by so doing there is a *possibility* that it may at some future day destroy the Union ?

COMPARATIVE VALUE OF SLAVE LABOR AND COMPENSATED  
LABOR.

Again, if the South would give this subject its due consideration, it might be clearly shown to them that their best interests are by no means dependent on slavery, and never have been ; and for this reason there should be no reluctance or misgiving on their part in the surrender of slavery for the sake of peace.

There are two states of society—two systems of labor—either of which the South can select at its own option. The Southern planter may purchase his slaves at a considerable outlay of capital ; be subject to interest upon it ; provide his slaves with their homes and their clothing ; pay their bills in sickness ; maintain them in infancy and old age, and furnish them with such comforts as they may have beyond a mere subsistence ; incur the risk as to their life and health ; their habits of industry or insubordination ; the expenses of the overseer ; the risk of insurrection ; the necessity of arming himself and his wife and children for protection, and be subject to the sleepless nights—the ever-watchful anxiety of the system. Or he may deal with his servants and laborers as men ; devolving on them the responsibility of their own maintenance in such state and condition as the just recompense of their industry and faithfulness entitles them to ; leaving them to rear up their children under their own care as parents ; encouraging them to educate and elevate their race, mentally and morally ; permitting them to own themselves and such

property as they may acquire, and to enjoy the sweets and blessings of liberty, coupled with those kind and beneficent influences that ever exist between a just and humane landlord and his tenantry, where mutual good offices can be rendered and reciprocated ; coupled, also, with the peace and harmony that is ever the attendant on relations thus sustained. Surely, there can be little doubt which of these systems can work the most good.

The opinion of Reverdy Johnson on this subject, who has always been a native of a slave state, is worthy of consideration. He says : “ I believe, and have ever believed, since I was capable of thought, that slavery is a great affliction to any country where it prevails ; and, so believing, I can never vote for any measure calculated to enlarge its area, or to render more permanent its duration. In some latitudes, and for some agricultural staples, slave labor may be to the master the most valuable species of labor, though this I greatly doubt. In other states, and particularly in Maryland, I am convinced that it is the very dearest species of labor, and in all, as far as national wealth, and power, and happiness, are concerned, I am persuaded it admits of no comparison with the labor of freemen—and, above all, disguise it as we may, *if the laws of population shall not be changed by Providence, or man's nature shall not be changed, it is an institution sooner or later pregnant with fearful peril.*”

If this be so, slavery is a thriftless, improvident system, as well as dangerous in itself, and the South will lose nothing—indeed, will be every way the gainers—in the voluntary surrender of it for the sake of peace ; a peace as dear to them and their children as to Northern fathers and sons.

With freedom granted to the slaves, and proper treatment, remuneration and education, I believe they would form, in those sections of country where the climate is congenial to them, the most faithful, devoted peasantry in the world.

Simultaneously with the liberation of the slave, all the base acts of certain Northern states, expelling the colored race from their borders, and subjecting them to obnoxious penalties and provisions, should be repealed. They form a stigma of in-

justice and oppression in the legislation of those states, second only to the greater crime of the maintenance of African slavery.

RELIGIOUS ASPECT OF THE QUESTION OF SLAVERY.

A further and most controlling reason why slavery should be surrendered to SECURE A SAFE AND PERMANENT PEACE, is the religious aspect of the question.

How can we look for peace, and a blessing upon it, if we fail to regard the eternal principles of right and justice? The Almighty seems to have designed this continent to be the scene of a new dispensation in government, which should form a marked improvement as compared with the despotic and feudalistic governments of the Old World.

For this reason this country lay long hid from the rest of the world, until the great leading events in the history of man had opened hopes of better progress—until the advent of the benign dispensation of the Saviour, the discovery of the mariner's compass, the invention of printing, and the commencement of the long roll of march of the Reformation through the ages. At such an era our fathers sought a new clime, as a refuge from the persecutions of the Old World, where they might find institutions after their own model, and enjoy "Freedom to worship God."

Their great destiny subjected them, as a necessary prerequisite, to great trials, a struggle with the gloom and deprivations of the wilderness; wars with a savage foe, with the French Canadian provinces, and, ultimately, with England, for the preservation of those great principles of liberty they had come hither to gain. But a still greater trial awaited them. Bound up with the new institutions they had established was the bane of slavery, for which there was but one antidote—early and systematic efforts for its entire removal.

Our fathers knew the evil. They had proclaimed it in remonstrances to the throne of England against the refusal of the colonial governors to approve of laws prohibiting the slave-trade. They protested against the introduction of slaves, as an evil of "most alarming nature, and which might, in time,

have a most destructive influence on the security and happiness of the people ;” and the measures of the home government, in his respect, were, by one of the leading slave states, in her first constitution, alleged as a ground of separation from England.

Jefferson knew and foretold the consequences of slavery, and thought he saw “the way preparing, under the auspices of heaven, for its quiet, total emancipation.” But, unfortunately, in the trial assigned to test our appreciation of the boon of liberty which Providence had granted to us, and our sense of justice and integrity as a people, *we failed*, and the judgments of God have at length come down upon us as directly as though they had been previously proclaimed against us from some Mount Ebal, as the certain reward of crime.

Had our fathers of the Revolution, after achieving their independence and establishing the Constitution, strenuously exerted themselves to procure the gradual abolition of slavery, it would long since have been terminated ; but the golden moment of a peaceable solution of the difficulty passed away. The institution became radically fixed upon us, until its own desperate disease threatens to become its cure, amid great calamities wrought upon us as a people.

The present strife comes not of men’s asking. There is an inquisition for blood on our hands. God is as apparent now in history as when he released his own people with an outstretched arm and great judgments. Is it not in vain, then, for us, in this hour of our calamity, to attempt to compound for the evils of slavery ? Can we propitiate a just Providence by so doing ? Can we hope for peace unless we put the accursed thing away from us ?

I have thus completed my remarks on the several points proposed—*the effect of the rebellion on slavery in war, and the various considerations bearing on the question of peace ; a peace which shall be a final solution, and rest from all our difficulties.*

Permit me now to advert, very briefly, to one or two objections urged to the views I have advanced, and to the consistency of advocating them.

CONSTITUTIONALITY OF MEASURES PUT FORTH AGAINST SLAVERY IN DEFENCE OF THE UNION.

It is contended to be unconstitutional to exert the power of the government to put down slavery. I concede it to be so, so far as slavery is recognized and upheld in the Constitution. But when slavery changes the form under which only it is recognized in the Constitution, and becomes treason, and slaveholders become traitors, then I say we may constitutionally put down alike both the treason and the traitor.

Slavery has been perverted from its original position in this government. It is now arrayed against it as an antagonistic force. It is the lifeblood and motive power of the rebellion. It rears its snaky folds, and strikes its poisonous darts directly at the Constitution. On account of this foul attempt it has become accursed of God and man, and the person who fails to strike at the monster, who weeps at his death or sympathizes at his fall, greatly misunderstands his position if he thinks, by so doing, he maintains the Constitution and the Union, or supports the principles or patriotism of its founders.

RECONSTRUCTION.

One word on reconstruction. The shock of rebellion has left the body politic of our state governments, which have been partially recovered to us, wounded, shattered, and bleeding, at the best. Time must be granted for their recovery. The decayed, gangrene flesh must have opportunity to slough off, until, through the agency of new men, or at least of men who have been healed from the leprosy of treason, new life shall be imparted, and such states, through the people representing them, may once more resume their position as bright stars in the Union, redeemed, emancipated, and disenthralled.

A change from rebellion to loyalty, from the horrors of war to the blessings of peace, from a position in the Confederacy to one in this blessed Union, prepared for the full and proper discharge of its duties, is not a slight matter or without its difficulties. Wise measures must be adapted to this end,

securing the action of just and loyal men. Any exception taken to the necessary and essential qualifications required to perfect a change in such manner, is merely an exception to those laws which God has established for the recovery of any broken down, wounded, shattered, yet living thing of his creation.

CONSISTENCY OF UNION MEN SHOWN ALIKE IN OPPOSITION  
TO NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN ULTRAISTS.

The charge of inconsistency is sometimes made against those who have heretofore opposed abolition disunionists, but who now stand arrayed by the flag of their country, to strike down rebellion, in so doing, slavery is struck down with it.

This charge is made by so-called peace party men. Its unfounded character will appear from a moment's examination, while the clearest evidence of inconsistency will attach to those who make it.

The distinctive character of true democracy has been, at all times, its firm, consistent, devoted, undying love to the Union. It was this attachment that caused its opposition, in connection with that of all true Union men, to that phase of political abolitionism that sought to override the Constitution and denounce it "as a league with hell," having no binding effect on the people. That caused it to oppose and lament the bitter denunciations fulminated by this interest against the South, as tending to excite hostility and jealousy, and ultimately to react in sundering the ties that bind us together as a people. All true conservative men deeply regretted the existence of slavery among us, but believed the destruction of the Union would tend, in no manner, to remove the evil, but would elevate and enthrone it in an independent nationality along our borders, fraught with incalculable evil to us, and removing all hope of freedom for ever from the slave. While under the Constitution, with due regard to the rights of the states, it was hoped peace might be preserved, until, through the ameliorating influences of the gospel, and a better ultimate civilization, slavery would be done away.

From these views true Union men have never departed. But the same love of the Union that induced them to oppose danger from this source, led them equally to oppose danger to the Union from nullification, secession, and every other unconstitutional and disloyal\* ultraism of the South. Their consistency has not been bounded by any sectional limit. Their eyes have been fixed on the broad flag of the nation, and the first hand raised to strike it down, North or South, has been to them the hand of an enemy. Death to treason, come whence it may, is their war-cry !

What, on the other hand, has been the course of the so-called peace party men ? Have they, at all times, held an even hand against the disturbers of their country's peace ? Have they looked with abhorrence at the parricidal course of those men who have severed the Union, and dashed its flag to the earth. Let them answer before God and their country. Especially let them bring no charge against those who have been everywhere, and at all times, for the Union, and who now stand banded together, with all true friends of the country, to put down a godless rebellion !

I trust the bitterness of party feeling on this subject is beginning to give way, and that justice, patriotism, and love of the Union, will ere long be in the ascendant, so that, before another birthday of the Union shall come round, all parties will see that the only way of safety is to inscribe on their flag, —Uncompromising opposition to the rebellion and to its cause. If this be so, it will be comparatively immaterial which party triumphs, provided the country triumphs. There is a fearful responsibility resting upon us in this respect, as *it is an undoubted fact that with a united North, rebellion would at once cease. Disunion here now is its only reliance.*

#### APPEAL TO THE SOUTH.

May we not hope, also that our brethren of the South may yet see, from their own point of view and their own experience, though late, the ruin they have brought on themselves and the country, and hasten to retrace their steps. Their in-



terests, as well as ours, plead for peace ; peace established on principles that will insure its permanence.

To secure this end, is it asking too much, after all the sufferings we have endured, to demand a release of slave property, now rendered almost worthless by their own acts, and around which have clustered all the causes of dissension between us ? Especially is it asking too much, if, in so doing, we remit all other claim of indemnity, and remove, at the same time, an evil, which, if continued, would for ever hang over them and us, as a black cloud of impending doom ? Surely these questions can admit of but one answer from any dispassionate mind. Could they be submitted to those noble patriots who framed our Constitution, they would meet with no dissenting voice.

Why, then, should not peace, tendered on the only ground which can insure its permanence, be accepted ? The outcry of an attempt at subjugation will hardly stay a claim believed to be alike for the mutual benefit of all parties. There is a determination on the part of the people to see an *end* in this matter, and put down a rebellion unexampled in the baseness of its instigation and in the atrocity of its progress : and to put it down in a manner so that it shall not arise again to harm us. When the evil spirit that has possessed our Southern brethren is expelled from them, and they are once more in their right mind, we shall have no farther difficulty with them. But there will be nothing left to contingency—no smothered embers, to break out again into a blaze—no declaration of peace, where there is no peace. That angelic visitor will not be permitted to come to us in such a questionable shape that we shall not know whether

“ She brings us airs from heaven, or blasts from hell ! ”

The accursed vampire that has fed on the blood of our children, North and South, will not be allowed to rear his head again, to molest any future generation ! Our government, henceforth, never will fulfill its high destiny until it shall be indeed free—the hope and blessing of all nations ; *without treason and temptation to treason ; and WITHOUT A SLAVE !*

